

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE, MAINE, CHAIR
JOHN F. KERRY, MASSACHUSETTS, RANKING MEMBER

CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, MISSOURI
CONRAD BURNS, MONTANA
ROBERT F. BENNETT, UTAH
MICHAEL ENZI, WYOMING
PETER G. FITZGERALD, ILLINOIS
MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
GEORGE ALLEN, VIRGINIA
JOHN ENSIGN, NEVADA
JIM COLEMAN, MINNESOTA

CARL LEVIN, MICHIGAN
TOM HARKIN, IOWA
JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT
MARY LANDRIEU, LOUISIANA
JOHN EDWARDS, NORTH CAROLINA
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
EVAN BAYH, INDIANA
MARK PRYOR, ARKANSAS

MARK E. WARREN, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL
PATRICIA R. FORBES, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

October 24, 2003

BY FACSIMILE
ORIGINAL BY U.S. MAIL

The Honorable Thomas J. Ridge
Secretary of Homeland Security
Naval Security Station
Nebraska and Massachusetts Avenues, NW
Washington, DC 20393

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As Chair of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I applaud the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) commitment to small business and the efforts of Mr. Kevin Boshears, Director for the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business, to implement a small business procurement program. The DHS is predicted to be one of the Federal government's largest buyers this fiscal year and your leadership and the actions your agency is taking in this area to help small business will largely decide whether the Federal Government, as a whole, achieves small business procurement goals.

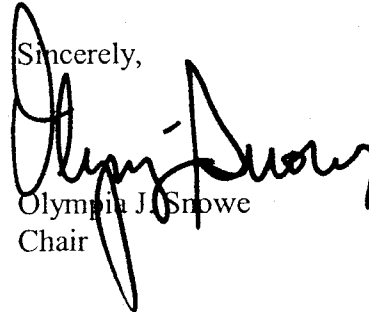
I appreciate Mr. Boshears taking the time to meet recently with a representative of my Small Business Committee to share highlights of the DHS small business procurement program. I understand that this program goes beyond the basic approach and incorporates the idea of "shared responsibility" to hold all DHS procurement personnel accountable. I was pleased to learn that, within a short period of time, Mr. Boshears and his staff have taken a number of actions to promote procurement opportunities at DHS for small business, including: a newly launched procurement assistance website, participation in several small business conferences, teaming up with the Small Business Administration on its National Matchmaking Tour, establishment of a mentor-protege program, and the preparation and publication of a "Forecast of Contract Opportunities for Fiscal Year 2004."

The efforts of Mr. Boshears and his staff to make this policy a part of the agency's culture in support of its mission clearly demonstrate their dedication to including small business in the DHS acquisition program and deserve special attention. I am confident the results of these efforts will reflect positively on DHS to the benefit of small business.

The Honorable Thomas J. Ridge
Page 2

Thank you for your continued support of small business. I look forward to working with you to ensure the results of these efforts provide much needed opportunities for small business to compete for DHS procurements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Olympia J. Snowe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Olympia" being more prominent and the last name "Snowe" following in a similar style. The signature is written over the printed name and title.

Olympia J. Snowe
Chair